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CONGRESSIONAL RECORD — SENATE

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PRIVATE COMMITTEE OF THREE TO EXCHANGE "BULLDOZERS" FOR CUBAN PRISONERS

Mr. MORSE. Mr. President, the RECORD will show that yesterday I discussed the problem involved in connection with the volunteer committee, headed by Mrs. Roosevelt, and joined by Walter Reuther and Dr. Milton Eisenhower, which is seeking to raise funds to ransom a group of Cuban exiles who are held prisoner in Cuba by Castro.

Earlier in my remarks I said that, interestingly enough, I had discussed this matter in answer to a question which was put to me on a television program in Cleveland Sunday afternoon. That occurred in the course of the program known as "The Open Circuit," conducted by station KYW. I told the Senate that today I would place in the RECORD the statement I made on that program Sunday, because I thought the Senate should know what public statement I had made prior to the time when the Senator from New Hampshire [Mr. BRADDES] raised the question on the floor of the Senate yesterday afternoon.

I have received from the director of that program on Station KYW-TV, in Cleveland, the following telegram:

CLEVELAND, OHIO, May 23, 1961.
Hon. Senator WAYNE MORSE,
Senate Office Building,
Washington, D.C.:

Following is transcript of your remarks in answer to a question from Glen Lavery: "Do you believe that Mrs. Roosevelt, Mr. Milton Eisenhower, and Mr. Reuther perhaps as a suggestion should appoint themselves a committee of three to meet Castro's demands for bulldozers in exchange for prisoners?"

"Well, in my judgment, I want to stress that I think any private group in the United States should not take any course of action in regard to a foreign policy problem without first getting clearance from the State Department. I assume from what I read in the papers today that there has been some unofficial indication to them that the State Department doesn't intend to stand in the way. But let us remember that under the Constitution the job of handling foreign affairs is the job of the President, acting through the State Department, and not the job of private citizens. I don't know any body that recognizes that more than the incomparable Mrs. Roosevelt. So I take it for granted that whatever program they are working out on humanitarian basis is getting clearance from the State Department."

Deeply grateful for your providing most successful program in "Open Circuit" series. Hope you will be able to send copy of CONGRESSIONAL RECORD. May I add my personal appreciation to the deep gratitude of KYW-TV.

BEN WECHSLER,
Public Affairs Director.

I close this comment by restating what I said yesterday on the floor of the Senate—that, in my judgment, the American people are entitled to know whether the program of the Eleanor Roosevelt committee does have clearance from the State Department; and if it does, let us openly say this is a part of the foreign policy of the United States, and this committee is acting as an agent for the State Department.

Mr. President, if there is anything I do not like in the administration of government, it is any procedure which could, to the slightest extent, be described as indirection or subterfuge.

I repeat that, as a matter of public policy, it is bad precedent to have volunteer committees springing up in this country and proceeding to exercise jurisdiction in regard to any phase of foreign policy. That is why I was a critic of the newspaper editors of this country when, a couple of years ago, they published a statement without clearance from the State Department. I know they did not have clearance from the State Department, because the Under Secretary of State for Latin American Affairs came to the Subcommittee on Latin American Affairs and asked for counsel and advice as to what the State Department should do about the embarrassment which had been caused by the editorial association of this country in its intervention in a foreign policy matter, without even extending to the State Department the decency and the courtesy to find out whether inviting Castro to the country might in any way be embarrassing to the Government. I protested it then, and I would feel derelict in my duty as chairman of the Subcommittee on Latin American Affairs by failing to raise the question now.

Notwithstanding the fact that there are on the committee persons whom I consider to be wonderful people, and whom I consider as my friends, and for whom I have nothing but admiration for their instinct of humanitarian reaction to the brutality of Castro, nevertheless I want to say to the administration, which is my administration, too, it is its duty to make clear that our foreign affairs are going to be run by the White House and the State Department, and not by any self-appointed volunteer groups, no matter how distinguished the personnel of the groups may be.

Mr. SALTONSTALL. Mr. President, will the Senator yield?

Mr. MORSE. I yield.

Mr. SALTONSTALL. The Senator, as I understand, does not take the position that committees of people cannot get together for the purpose of raising funds, but that where they get together for the purpose of raising funds, where they become involved in our international or foreign policies, then certainly the administration, through the State Department, should take a position as to whether or not it is or is not an interference with the foreign policy. Is that correct?

Mr. MORSE. That is exactly the position of the Senator from Oregon.

Mr. SALTONSTALL. I agree with the Senator in that position.

Mr. MORSE. I thank the Senator for his association with my point of view. The Senator from Massachusetts knows the high regard I have for him in the whole field of foreign relations and in our defense program, too.

I had the honor of serving with the Senator from Massachusetts on the Armed Services Committee for some years, before I went to the Foreign Relations Committee. I feel buttressed in my conviction in knowing that the Senator from Massachusetts shares my view.